

From this town, at our first entrance in the evening, on Saturday (22nd February), our Captain despatched a Cimaroon with a token and certain order to the Master: who had, these three weeks, kept good watch against the enemy, and shifted in the woods for fresh victual, for the relief and recovery of our men left aboard.

As soon as this messenger was come to the shore, calling to our ship, as bringing some news, he was quickly fet[ched] aboard by those which longed to hear of our Captain's speeding: but when he showed the toothpike of gold, which he said our Captain had sent for a token to ELLIS HIXOM, with charge to meet him at such a river: though the Master knew well the Captain's toothpike; yet by reason of his admonition and caveat [*warning*] given him at parting, he (though he bewrayed no sign of distrusting the Cimaroon) yet stood as amazed, least something had befallen our Captain otherwise than well. The Cimaroon perceiving this, told him, that it was night when he was sent away, so that our Captain could not send any letter; but yet with the point of his knife, he wrote something upon the toothpick, "which," he said, "should be sufficient to gain credit to the messenger."

Thereupon, the Master looked upon it, and saw written, *By me, FRANCIS DRAKE*: wherefore he believed, and according to the message, prepared what provision he could, and repaired to the mouth of the river of Tortugos, as the Cimaroons that went with him then named it.

That afternoon towards three a clock, we were come down to that river, not past half-an-hour before we saw our pinnace ready come to receive us: which was unto us all a double rejoicing : first that we saw them, and next, so soon. Our Captain with all our company praised GOD most heartily, for that we saw our pinnace and fellows again.

We all seemed to these, who had lived at rest and plenty all this while aboard, as men strangely changed (our Captain yet not much changed) in countenance and plight: and indeed our long fasting and sore travail might somewhat fore-pine and waste us; but the grief we drew inwardly, for that we returned without that gold and treasure we hoped for, did no doubt show her print and footsteps in our faces.

The rest of our men which were then missed, could not travel so well as our Captain, and therefore were left at the